THE ENCYCLOPEDIA AFRICANA PROJECT
OF W.E.B. DU BOIS
Clarence G. Contee

When Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois died in Accra, Ghana, on August 27, 1963, he was at work on one of the primary missions of his life, the Encyclopedia Africana. Scholar, polemicist, philosopher-prophet, and one of the founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Du Bois had spent more than half a century at this unfulfilled dream. Born in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, on February 23, 1868, he grew up full of race pride and race consciousness. Graduated from Harvard in 1895 with a Ph.D. in history, the first Black to do so, he was keenly aware of the significances of a glorious past to any race seeking support in the fulfillment of its dignity and identity.1

An encyclopedia can contain the greatness of the past and present of a people, of a specific ideology, or of mankind. Du Bois planned a special kind of encyclopedia. Rather than attempting to give a summary of all branches of knowledge of all groups, he hoped to publish one extolling the greatness and glory of the African and Afro-American, past and present. The modern encyclopedia of either type aims to disseminate accurate and objective information. But encyclopedias such as the Great Soviet Encyclopedia employ dogmatic interpretations in their presentation of data,2 and such knowledge as Du Bois hoped to include would serve well the future of the "nation" of Black peoples anxious to present their positive contributions to world civilization and culture, counter negative images, and help racial amelioration.3

It is difficult to determine exactly how Du Bois got his conceptions for an encyclopedia Africana. His project was not the first; there had been at least one other attempt to collect and to publish an extensive work on the Afro-American and the African. In 1896 the Afro-American Encyclopaedia appeared, compiled and edited by James T. Haley. The internal evidence suggests that Haley was White, since the term "their" is used throughout when referring to the Black


African Historical Studies, IV, 1 (1971) 77
persons who discussed race matters in the book. This encyclopedia was not arranged in the usual alphabetical order; it included an alphabetical list of topics covered — addresses, biographies, sermons, poems, lectures, educational and religious information, and a long list of Black newspapers. The Afro-American Encyclopaedia was apparently written for profit rather than racial uplift, Du Bois' main purpose.4

It is very possible that Du Bois used the Afro-American Encyclopaedia for his research on Negro problems. It seems likely, however, that there were at least three other distinctive sources, varying in degrees of significance, for his own conceptions. One possible source, more a model than an important impetus, was the Jewish Encyclopedia, first published in 1901. Du Bois, like many other Blacks, often compared the Black struggle for liberation with the Jewish experience. Colin Legum states that one of the closest parallels to Pan-Africanism "is perhaps Zionism;" he cites Du Bois who said in 1919 that "the African movement means to us what the Zionist movement must mean to the Jews, the centralization of race effort and the recognition of a racial fount."5 One needs only to glance through the preface of the Jewish Encyclopedia to note the analogies. It may be coincidental, but the Jewish Encyclopedia was originally issued during the time Du Bois first began to publicize his project.6

A second source of greater significance was obviously his own work. From 1898 to 1916 Du Bois directed the Atlanta University Studies, which were also edited in his name. These studies were designed to demonstrate conclusively (and Du Bois himself sought evidence of this) that the truth about the Negro, if gathered and presented scientifically, would dispel negative distortions in the mind of the public, and present the Blacks of the world as men of respect, dignity, equality, and opportunity. Most of these studies contained historical and social references to the African background of Blacks, and Du Bois demonstrated his Pan-African sentiments in them. In 1940 he wrote: "In all we published a total of 2,172 pages which formed a current encyclopedia on the American Negro problems." The studies were distributed in libraries around the world; they were praised and quoted by social scientists,7 and widely used by scholars.

The third, the most important, the most enduring, and the earliest source for the Encyclopedia Africana was the Black cultural nationalism of the Du Bois of that era. While a student at Harvard University in the late 1880's, Du Bois had called Negroes members of a "nation," and his famous study, The Philadelphia Negro (1899), was based upon a study of the sociology of an ethnic group in an urban environment. As a member of the elitist American Negro Academy, he fostered the growth of Black culture, especially in his essay, The

Conservation of the Races (1897), for the Academy. He carried his cultural Black nationalism to London as a delegate to the Pan-African Conference of 1900. He was among the first in his Souls of Black Folk (1903) to talk about African survivals among the Negroes in the New World, and an early advocate of what has been later termed "negritude," which stresses the positive uniqueness of being a Negro.8

As a natural outgrowth of his scholarly and sentimental interests in the interrelationships of Blacks everywhere, Du Bois began in 1909 to publicly spread his ideas about editing and publishing an encyclopedia which would treat "the black race in the world and those descended from it." He foresaw it as a commemoration of the semicentennial of the emancipation of the Negro in America in 1913 and of the tercentenary of the landing of Negroes in the British North American colonies in 1919, with the first volume to appear in the former year, the succeeding volumes in the latter. At this time he set no exact number and no scheme for the projected volumes.9

Du Bois organized the writing and the editing of the encyclopedia's articles so that ideology would remain in the hands of Blacks in America, in Africa, and in the West Indies. To facilitate this, he set up a board of editors, each of whom was to pursue a single line of investigation; these were to be Negroes from the triangular areas. The letterhead of the board contained sixty-four names, although this is probably an incomplete list. Among the Negro Americans were Kelly Miller, professor at Howard University; J. W. E. Bowen, long-time leader of religious education at Gammon Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia; W. S. Scarbrough, scholar of the classics and president of Wilberforce University; J. W. Cromwell, an associate of Du Bois' in the American Negro Academy and an author of works on Negro history; and E. C. Williams, a member of the Niagara Movement in Ohio and later librarian of Howard University.10 Most of these men had graduated from leading northern and Negro colleges and universities, and they were examples of what Du Bois called the "Talented Tenth."

Du Bois also obtained the services of some of the leading West Africans at the turn of the century, men who had made important contributions to the understanding of Black life. Among these persons selected for the editorial board were John Mensah Sarbah, lawyer, author, and member of the Gold Coast Legislative Council; Joseph E. Casely-Hayford, lawyer and author of Ethiopia Unbound; and Henry Carr, well-known Nigerian administrator. These Africans, like the

10. W. E. B. Du Bois to E. C. Williams, May 20, 1909, Joel E. Spingarn Papers, Negro Collection, Howard University; the names of the "Board of Advisors" and the "Board of Editors" were on the side margin of the letterhead. August Meier, Negro Thought in America (Ann Arbor, 1966); E. L. Josey, "Edward Christopher Williams: Librarian's Librarian," Negro History Bulletin, 33, 3 (March, 1970), 70-77.
Afro-American members of the board, were trained at some of the leading universities in the English-speaking world. The encyclopedia was to be an example of intellectual Pan-Africanism.11

Du Bois practiced a "separate but equal" policy when it came to the roles he gave White authorities to perform for the Encyclopedia Africana. He made them a "board of advisors" to direct the studies of the Black scholars. Listed on the letterhead were the names of Sir Harry H. Johnston, famous explorer, administrator, and student of Africans and Afro-Americans; Dr. Francis Hoggan, an English medical doctor who later published in the Crisis on the Negro;12 and Albert Bushnell Hart, William James, and Hugo Mustenberg, all former professors of Du Bois at Harvard.13 In addition, he invited two well-known White anthropologists, Dr. A. F. Chamberlain, a Clark University professor who believed that Africans had invented the smelting and use of iron, and Dr. Franz Boas, the Columbia University friend of Du Bois and "father of American anthropology" who had praised the African past at an Atlanta University commencement address in 1906.14 Du Bois had gotten a great deal of his inspiration to investigate the African past from this speech.15

Within three years after Du Bois had officially begun his own project, a prospectus on a similar encyclopedia, also Pan-African oriented, appeared in 1912. The editor-in-chief of the proposed six volume work -- Murray's Historical and Biographical Encyclopedia of the Colored Race throughout the World -- was Daniel Alexander Payne Murray, a Black staff member of the Library of Congress from 1871 to 1922. Murray served at the Library of Congress in various capacities "up to an assistant librarian." In 1900 he prepared a list of Negro authors and their books from the holdings of the Library for use in connection with the Negro exhibition at the Paris Exposition of 1900, perhaps the first

14. Xerox copy of the speech published in the Bulletin of Atlanta University (June, 1906) sent to the author through the courtesy of the Trevor Arnott Library, Atlanta University.
done for the Library of Congress. Du Bois personally contributed an exhibit to the Paris Exposition, and it was here and at the Pan-African Conference of 1900 that he met Thomas J. Calloway, Special Commissioner (Negro) of the United States to the Exposition, who praised Murray's list. Murray's elaborate sixteen page prospectus listed several well-known Blacks as members of a "corps of thirty assistant editors." Among these persons were John E. Bruce, Arthur A. Schomburg, William C. Bolivar, Reverend J. M. Boddy, John W. Cromwell, L. M. Hershaw, S. Rouzier of Haiti, James Albert Johnson -- a bishop in South Africa, James Carmichael Smith of Sierra Leone, Charles Alexander, Stansbury Boyce, G. J. F. Madiou of Haiti, W. S. Scarborough of Wilberforce University, and the Honorable G. W. Gibson. The prospectus stated that entries would include as many persons from around the world as possible who had any discernible Negro blood, and they would be listed alphabetically. It is entirely possible that Du Bois knew of Murray's project. Hershaw and Scarborough were members of the Niagara Movement, and Hershaw had helped Du Bois to found and edit the Horizon, the organ of that movement. Scarborough and Cromwell were members of the original board of editors for the Encyclopedia Africana.

The publication of either of the Pan-African encyclopedias would certainly have provided foundations for both Afro-American and African nationalism; the examples of Black heroes and Black contributions to world civilizations and cultures would have stimulated race pride, self-respect, and the desire for self-determination; the numerical growth of specialized encyclopedias in the twentieth century is an excellent indication of the impact of national, religious, racial, and ideological conflicts on compendiums of knowledge.

But the Encyclopedia Africana and Murray's Historical and Biographical Encyclopedia of the Colored Race throughout the World remained only dreams and unfulfilled hopes. Not much is known about the results of Murray's work, but in the next twenty-five years, from 1910 to 1934, Du Bois developed into one of the main leaders of protest on the conditions of the Black man everywhere. His interests became less scholarly and more activist. The only Black national officer of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, which

18. There is a prospectus in the Daniel Alexander Payne Murray file in the Negro collection at Howard University.
21. Robert Collison, Encyclopaedias: Their History throughout the Ages (London, 1966), 199-228. Collison notes that "much of Africa is not yet the subject of specialist encyclopaedias" (p. 225). He makes no mention of a project to publish an Encyclopedia Africana.
he helped to found in 1909, he joined it in 1910 as editor of the Crisis, its organ of propaganda, which he also founded. Anyone doing research on the Negro must turn to the Crisis during the years from 1910 to 1934, the years of his editorship. It is itself a veritable encyclopedia of the Black man in Africa, in Europe, and in the Americas.22 Du Bois did not publish any of the volumes of the project in these years; he discovered that there were few Black or White persons anxious to finance such a vast project, and he simply did not have the time for the arduous and demanding effort it would have taken. Moreover, he put aside his work on his Encyclopedia Africana for his 1921 Pan-African activities.23

The resurrection in 1931 of the concept of an encyclopedia containing the greatness of the Black man in America and elsewhere was apparently not due to any overt efforts on Du Bois' part.24 Present evidence indicates that it was the idea of Dr. Anson Phelps-Stokes, White president of the Phelps-Stokes Fund and dean of Washington Cathedral, and other trustees of the fund to call a meeting in Washington, D.C., on November 7, 1931, "to consider the possibility and advisability of publishing, with the help of the Phelps-Stokes Fund and other foundations, groups and individuals who may be interested, an Encyclopedia of the Negro."25 Of the twenty persons there, half were White. Among the Blacks present were Professor James Weldon Johnson, former executive secretary of the NAACP, then teaching literature at Fisk University; president of Howard University Dr. Mordecai Johnson; professor of sociology at Howard Kelley Miller; and the well-known author of works on Black history and literature Professor Benjamin Brawley, also of Howard. Walter White represented the NAACP, and Eugene Kinkle Jones the National Urban League. It was a meeting of the "liberal" establishment.

Du Bois was not among those invited to attend the first meeting. Neither was Dr. Carter G. Woodson, Harvard's second Black Ph.D., also in history (1912), founder in 1915 of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History and founder and editor of the respected Journal of Negro History, begun in 1916.26 According to Du Bois, his omission had been caused by a continued pique among members of the Phelps-Stokes Fund over his sharp criticisms of the Phelps-Stokes reports on education in Africa for Black Africans, which advocated industrial rather than leadership training.27 Dr. Alain Locke of Howard, Woodson, and Du Bois were invited to the second meeting, held on January 9, 1932. Locke and Du Bois appeared, but Woodson did not. He continued to work on his own plans for an encyclopedia of the Negro around the world. By the end of

24. It states in Du Bois and Johnson, Encyclopedia of the Negro, 199-200, that the Phelps-Stokes Fund meeting where the decision was made to revive an encyclopedia of the Negro project was held on April 27, 1931.
25. Crisis, 42, 8 (August, 1932), 267.
26. A very good short biography of Carter G. Woodson can be found in Current Biography, 1944 (New York, 1945), 741-743.
27. Crisis, 32, 2 (June, 1926), 86-89, contains a scathing review of the reports by Du Bois; Du Bois, Dusk of Dawn, 323.
the third meeting on March 12, 1932, a board of directors had been created, and the project had been incorporated. Among the Whites on the board were Dr. Phelps-Stokes as chairman; Dr. James Dillard, formerly of the Jeans and Slater Funds; Professor A. R. Radcliffe-Brown of the anthropology department at the University of Chicago; and Dr. C. T. Loram, Sterling Professor of Education at Yale, formerly of South Africa. Afro-Americans named were Principal Robert Moton of Tuskegee as vice-chairman, Benjamin Brawley, John Hope, president of Atlanta University, James Weldon Johnson, and Du Bois. Work on the encyclopedia was not expected to start for at least a year.\textsuperscript{28}

Elaborate plans for the Encyclopedia of the Negro were made. A budget of $225,000 was proposed to produce four volumes of findings and contributions. An executive committee was appointed. While the scope of the encyclopedia indicated a concentration on Negroes in the New World, Africans were not to be neglected. Whites who had made major contributions to Negro betterment were to be discussed. There was to be no discrimination toward contributors, who were offered the current rate of pay, two cents per word. Such a policy was an attempt to ensure "objective" and "balanced" treatment of the topics. To reinforce this policy, two editors, one Black and one White, were to be employed at $8000 each. The equality of the number of Blacks and Whites on all committees was to be retained. It was hoped that the best of Black and White scholarship, with adequate funding, could produce an excellent encyclopedia of the Negro.\textsuperscript{29}

Du Bois finished Black Reconstruction in 1935; his earnest efforts toward the completion of the Encyclopedia of the Negro apparently began then.\textsuperscript{30} He wrote to Dr. Boas, sending him an abstract of the plans for the encyclopedia and asking him for contributions to the project at the usual rate of pay. Boas willingly approved the plans, but he was unable to undertake any additional writing because of his advanced age and other commitments.\textsuperscript{31} Among the Black scholars Du Bois contacted was his former NAACP colleague, author James Weldon Johnson. Du Bois told him of the anticipated four-volume work of two million words, comparing it to the recently issued Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, and went on to mention that the Atlanta University Studies had been the only previous real attempt, thus ignoring the work of Woodson. Johnson agreed to do a few short articles on his interests, Negro literature, music, and the stage.\textsuperscript{32}

\textsuperscript{28} Crisis, 39, 7 (July, 1932), 233; Crisis, 41, 8 (August, 1932), 267-268; New York Times, May 29, 1932, 8; Encyclopedia of the Negro, 199.

\textsuperscript{29} The details of the plans can be found in the appendices of the Encyclopedia of the Negro, 199-217; New York Times, May 25, 1936, 17.

\textsuperscript{30} The problems of the writing of Black Reconstruction can be found in Herbert Aptheker, "Du Bois as Historian," Negro History Bulletin, 32, 4 (April, 1969), 6-16.


\textsuperscript{32} W.E.B. Du Bois to James Weldon Johnson, September 10, 1935; James Weldon Johnson to W.E.B. Du Bois, October 22, 1935, James Weldon Johnson Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature. See also the correspondence on the project in the Du Bois papers at Fisk University.
Thus Du Bois undertook again a task he had started originally in 1909. This time there was more hope that his efforts would yield dividends. Yet it is difficult to determine just when Du Bois received official sanction for his work. His letters to Boas and Johnson soliciting articles were written in 1935, and he says in his autobiography that between 1935 and 1944 he worked intermittently on this project. According to him, 1934, the year that he rejoined Atlanta University after leaving the NAACP for the first time, was the year that he was appointed editor-in-chief of the Phelps-Stokes Fund plans.33 Yet the New York Times did not announce his election as editor-in-chief at a meeting of the board of directors until May 25, 1936. The same article states that the other officers remained without any change of position, and that the temporary headquarters of the encyclopedia were at Atlanta University.34 Apparently Du Bois had some unofficial approbation for his actions in late 1935.

The New York Times announcement implied that publication of the encyclopedia was imminent. Pan-African sentiment was evident, for the paper said that the encyclopedia planned to cover "all important phases of Negro life and history in Africa, the United States and other parts of the world." Du Bois as editor-in-chief was to be aided by a prominent White scholar as co-editor, and had been working "for the past two years outlining the subjects [of] the encyclopedia and obtaining other information." Unfortunately, only small grants had been obtained from the Phelps-Stokes Fund, ran the article; appeals to other "larger" foundations for money were planned. The officers listed in the newspaper were the same ones that had been with the project since its inception.35 The project was supposed to be a model of integration in the days before integration became the law of the land.

Dr. Carter G. Woodson, as an established Black historian and editor of the Journal of Negro History, was outraged at the choice of Du Bois as editor-in-chief. He wrote almost immediately to the Afro-American, a Black newspaper based in Baltimore. In a scathing and bitter letter he attacked the selection of Du Bois and the sincerity of Anson Phelps-Stokes, Benjamin Brawley, and others connected with the Encyclopedia of the Negro program. Woodson stated that if Du Bois accepted the position he would be a "traitor to his race." Any project under the direction of the "crowd" led by Anson Phelps-Stokes and Thomas Jesse Jones (both White) to put into permanent form what they believed about the Negro race would simply perpetuate already-published negative misrepresentations by Whites. The encyclopedia was "a task which only the colored man himself can do." Whites could not write the history of Blacks because they did not "live and work among them."

Woodson was deeply and personally hurt. "This is an effort to supplant me and my work. But I am not dependent upon white people. I don't want them to finance an encyclopedia for me. What in the devil is money to me when I'm tied up in the hands of some man who's been oppressing my race for three centuries." In his account, Woodson revealed that at the inaugural meeting in 1931 (he said 1932), the Phelps-Stokes "crowd" had ignored Du Bois, Dr. Charles H.

35. Ibid.
Wesley, another Black Harvard Ph.D. in history, and Woodson. It was Walter White who had gotten Du Bois invited unanimously to the next meeting. They did not dare vote it down.

Much of Woodson's personal animosity no doubt stemmed from the fact that he had done extensive work on his encyclopedia Africana. This was, he said, his reason for rejecting the invitation, also extended to him in 1931, to join the Phelps-Stokes group. He had started even before 1932:

The Associated Publishers [founded by Woodson because White publishers would not publish his books on Negro history] was established in 1921 with the compiling of an encyclopedia as one of its avowed purposes. We have been collecting data ever since, and have hundreds of manuscripts on hand. We have our own proposition.

Woodson added that Du Bois had written to him that White control of the project did not exist, although Du Bois later changed his mind. Woodson went on with his own plans for his encyclopedia.

Brawley, whom Woodson had called a dilettante historian, wrote a careful and "objective" reply to Woodson's charges. As secretary of the project, Brawley defended Dr. Phelps-Stokes as a man who wanted "greater impartiality and objectivity . . . if both races were represented," and as a man who believed sincerely that a biracial editorial committee would see to it that Negroes were not placed in an unequal position. Brawley continued with his argument:

Even if there is a white co-editor, Dr. Du Bois is to be chairman of the Board. It might be added that, while it has been the endeavor to have the number of white and Negro directors equal, if ever there is an uneven number, the odd number is a Negro.

Anson Phelps-Stokes made no immediate direct answer to the Afro-American article of Woodson's. Nor apparently did Du Bois respond. He was busy making preparations to go to Europe on a grant from the Oberlaender Trust. He had also received two hundred dollars from the Phelps-Stokes Fund "for studies abroad.

36. The previous three paragraphs are based upon the accounts in the Baltimore Afro-American, May 30, 1936, and June 6, 1936.
38. The original statement by Brawley is in the Benjamin Brawley papers at Howard University; see also the Baltimore Afro-American, June 6, 1936, 7.
this summer in connection with Encyclopedia contributors, source material and subject classification." While in Europe Du Bois talked with White scholars about the encyclopedia.40

But even as he labored, Du Bois was faced with difficulties in accomplishing the successful completion of the encyclopedia. He found that one of the most serious obstacles was money. The great funds were shy; the times were depressingly. But Du Bois attributed his failure more to prejudice than to a general lack of funds. No money was available for any encyclopedia under the direction of colored scholars with only the collaboration of White men. Had the roles been reversed, Du Bois implied indignantly, money would have been no hurdle. It is possible, however, that the Marxist tendencies evident in Black Reconstruction were an important reason for rejection by the foundations. Yet he was ever the romantic; he kept his faith in the belief that something printed would emanate from the labors of himself and others during the years from 1935 to 1940.41 His efforts to work within the American system had not yet been abandoned.

Du Bois as editor-in-chief was even willing to use Phylon, a quarterly he founded in 1940 and edited from 1940 to 1944, to show what he had in mind as a style for some of the biographies to be included in the Encyclopedia of the Negro. The project still did not have the "necessary financial support, but Phylon will from time to time publish short sketches to indicate the kind of article which the Encyclopedia proposes to publish." His first sketch dealt with Alexander Pushkin, the world-renowned Russian literary figure (1799-1837) who was in some part Negro. Pushkin was a man with only a modicum of Black blood; he had little cultural impact on the Black "nation." Still, Du Bois felt that men of this kind should be included in the encyclopedia, since the biological theory of race made the results of miscegenation of vital interest. An editorial board would determine the racial identity of other prominent figures of mixed blood.42

The second exemplary sketch was also written by Du Bois. It was on Major Robert Russa Moton, principal of Tuskegee and the immediate successor of Booker T. Washington to that position. As Du Bois viewed it, this sketch was an exercise in how to deal with controversial contemporary Negro leaders; it was a question of balance and objectivity. Du Bois believed that his biography treated Moton objectively, in spite of the fact that Du Bois had occasionally criticized him in the past.43 Du Bois also published a short biography of Abraham, a runaway slave who in the middle 1830's became a leader of the Seminole Indians in the Seminole War, written by Kenneth Wiggins Porter of the department of

40. Du Bois, Dusk of Dawn, 323-324. Du Bois wrote to Franz Boas on May 11, 1936, that he was sailing for Europe on June 5, Boas Papers, American Philosophical Society Library; minutes of the meeting of the trustees of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, April 15, 1936, Anson Phelps-Stokes Collection, Yale University.
41. Du Bois, Dusk of Dawn, 322-323; W.E.B. Du Bois, Black Folk: Then and Now (New York, 1939), viii; minutes of the Phelps-Stokes Fund show how unsuccessful Anson Phelps-Stokes was in 1938 in getting money from the General Education Board and the Carnegie Corporation. No one questioned the authority or ability of Du Bois to edit the project.
42. W.E.B. Du Bois, "Pushkin," Phylon, 1, 3 (Third Quarter, 1940), 265-269.
history at Vassar. Porter wrote, "I hope that the project of an Encyclopedia of the Negro with Negro biographies suggested by you [Du Bois] in a recent number of Phylon, will go through." Porter complained that the Dictionary of American Biography had not been open to enough Black and minority biographies. What were needed, opined Porter, were a dictionary of Negro biography and a dictionary of Indian biography. Du Bois knew well the uses to which a magazine could be put for the promotion of one's pet ideals and projects.

In 1945, the Phelps-Stokes "crowd" published the only tangible results of their efforts, the Encyclopedia of the Negro: Preparatory Volume with Reference Lists and Reports. It was essentially a bibliography on the Negro in the United States and elsewhere. Statements in the book, especially the appendices by Anson Phelps-Stokes, by Du Bois, writing as the director of special research for the NAACP, which he had rejoined in 1944, and by Dr. Guy B. Johnson, White executive director of the Southern Regional Council and joint editor with Du Bois, told of the origins of the volume and of the problems in its gestation. The joint statement by Johnson and Du Bois stressed the immediate need for such an encyclopedia to counter distortions, to provide the truth, and to promote further study. The Jewish Encyclopedia was listed among the examples of those which had served the editors, and a definite analogy was cited from it. The two editors closed their statement with the hope that their encyclopedia would help replace prejudice with scientific fact and balanced conclusions. But Du Bois felt deeply that the preparatory volume was a failure and a bitter disappointment; all it did was refer readers to other sources. The resignation of Du Bois in 1948 from the NAACP, however, had little to do with the project.

Like those of its predecessors, the exact conditions under which the project for another Encyclopedia Africana was resurrected are difficult to state. The most important factor was the swift emergence of independent Ghana under the leadership of Francis Kofi Nwia Kwame Nkrumah. A recipient of four earned United States degrees and an honorary doctorate from his alma mater, Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, Nkrumah became an associate of Du Bois in the Pan-African movement and in anti-imperial causes in 1945, the same year the Phelps-Stokes volume was issued. It was through the monetary and ideological efforts of Nkrumah that Du Bois was able to spend his last few years in Ghana working on an encyclopedia Africana.

During the years from 1951 to 1960, Du Bois and Nkrumah drew closer. Both became more and more "leftist." Both became advocates of "African socialism." It is uncertain that Du Bois met with Nkrumah when he first came to the United States in 1951, although he stopped in New York City, where Du Bois was then living. When Nkrumah returned a second time in 1958 as the Prime Minister of independent Ghana, the two Pan-African veterans met. They could have talked

45. In the Current Biography account of Woodson published in the same year, it was reported that Woodson was then engaged in the preparation of a six-volume encyclopedia Africana; see 741.
then about plans for a revival of the project as one phase of Nkrumah's efforts to assume the leadership of continental and ideological Pan-Africanism. Later in the same year, Du Bois was unable to fulfill an invitation from Nkrumah to attend the "All-African Peoples' Conference," held in Accra in December. He was ill in Moscow, but his wife read his words for him at the first Pan-African meeting held on African soil.

Du Bois first went to Ghana in 1960. He was one of the 500 distinguished guests invited to witness the inauguration of the Republic of Ghana in June of that year. Nkrumah has written of Du Bois' visit as an example of the personification of the outlook for a United States of Africa, and on that occasion, Du Bois was deservedly honored as the "father of Pan-Africanism." The topic of an encyclopedia Africana might again have been mentioned. It is known that Du Bois used the opportunity while in Ghana to warn Africans against Anglo-American capitalism and to praise the Soviet system.

The following year Du Bois officially and openly joined the Communist Party of the United States of America. By the time the announcement was made public, he had emigrated to Ghana and had gone, according to the New York Times of November 23, 1961, "as head of New Negro Encyclopedia." The invitation had been extended by President Nkrumah, who provided Du Bois with a home and an attached office. The government also supplied a secretary and at least five research assistants, and Nkrumah visited him about once a month. The Ghana Academy of Sciences, located in Accra, was the official sponsoring agency for the Encyclopaedia Africana, as it was termed, and funds were funneled through it.

Du Bois very soon thereafter became the director of the secretariat for an encyclopedia Africana as a part of the work of the academy. Beginning in June, 1962, he issued information reports on the progress of the project. The aim of the secretariat was the actual production of an encyclopedia.

The object of the Secretariat is to plan, guide, and coordinate the work of assembling, organizing, and publishing materials for an Encyclopedia Africana that is authentically African in its point

53. Du Bois used the American spelling, "encyclopedia;" just before his death, the English spelling, "encyclopaedia," came into use in the information reports; see Information Report (Secretariat for an Encyclopedia Africana), 5 (June, 1963).
of view and at the same time a product of scientific scholarship. The Secretariat, the Director wishes it understood, is not merely a dream or a project; it is a directorate.

Du Bois asserted once again that there were obvious and critical needs for such an important publication; it would be of "great value to Africans in their present renaissance, as well as to peoples of the western world schooled to believe that Africa is a continent without a history -- until the coming of the Europeans."54 Du Bois had definitely not forgotten the functions of favorable facts for racial uplift and racial self-pride.

While the plans provided for a Pan-African thrust and control, Du Bois did not eliminate support and contributions from White European and United States Africanists. Among the supporters listed in the first information report were Dr. L.S.B. Leakey, the White palaeontologist; Dr. Horace Mann Bond, the Black American educator and friend of Du Bois; Dr. L. Gray Cowan, White executive secretary of the African Studies Association in the United States; Basil Davidson, well-known White English historian of Africa; and the Black Senegalese Abdoulaye Ly, Associate Director, Institute Française d'Afrique Noire, Dakar. All Du Bois demanded was accuracy of information, trusting that the truth would make Africans free from derogatory mythology and uninformed individuals.55 Du Bois remained ever faithful to his knowledge of the uses of the social sciences.

Du Bois made plans to spend the rest of his life in Ghana at work on the encyclopedia. It was an historic decision. He turned his back on his native land, and on February 17, 1963, became a citizen of Ghana.56 No other famous Afro-American leader of international stature has made a similar decision. Until the records of Du Bois and Nkrumah for these years are made available, speculation on the reasons remain at best significant insights. When Du Bois took out his Communist Party card, he said, "capitalism can not reform itself; it is doomed to self-destruction. No universal selfishness can bring social good to all."57 With his decision Du Bois abandoned capitalism, both in body and in spirit. The Ghanaian Times expressed another reason on the day after Du Bois died. The Pan-African nature of the move was "to do honour to a country where Pan-Africanism is the highest form of patriotism: to record his solidarity with a society striving toward socialism."58 And it cited Du Bois' own version of why:

When Dr. Du Bois took Ghanaian citizenship, he said: "My great grandfather was carried away in chains from the Gulf of Guinea. I have returned that my dust shall mingle with the dust of the forefathers. There is not much time left for me.

55. Ibid., 3-8.
But my life will flow on in the vigorous, young stream of Ghanaian life which lifts the African Personality to its proper place among men, and I shall not have lived and worked in vain.\textsuperscript{59}

Du Bois was still asking for a place in the sun for all members of the Negro race. In himself he read the past, present, and future greatness of the land and people of his beginnings. A nonagerarian, he could see continuity in the life and work of an individual.

Du Bois died on August 27, 1963, before he could consummate his conceptions of an encyclopedia Africana.\textsuperscript{60} By that time he had published several information reports detailing the plans for a biographical section of the project. He had also held a conference on the plans. In Freedomways he wrote that the encyclopedia was at last based in Africa and in African ideological control, and again he noted the unfulfilled tasks connected with the preparatory volume of the Encyclopedia of the Negro.\textsuperscript{61} But none of his own volumes had ever been published. In one sense, his mission had ended in failure. But at his death he was given a state funeral and buried near Christiansborg Castle in Accra. Desired praise was heaped upon him for his efforts on the encyclopedia. The Organization of African Unity was said by an African writer to be one of his monuments.\textsuperscript{62} President Nkrumah’s eulogies added to the praise, and he said that a “father and son” relationship had developed between the two giants of Pan-Africanism. He revealed that it was he who had invited Du Bois to come to Ghana “to pass the evening years of his life and to work on the Encyclopedia.”\textsuperscript{63}

The work on the encyclopedia was continued by Dr. W. Alphæus Hunton, an Afro-American and an old friend of Du Bois’; he served as editor-in-chief from 1963 to 1966. Hunton personified the continuity of the Pan-African movement for his mother, Addie Hunton, a famous YWCA worker, had participated in the Pan-African Congress meetings in the 1920’s.\textsuperscript{64} Hunton continued the information reports on the evolution of the encyclopedia. One of them states that the encyclopedia would have ten million words comprising ten volumes.\textsuperscript{65} At the meeting creating a continental board of editors representing twenty-nine

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid., 1.
\textsuperscript{61} Freedomways, III (1963), 28-30; Information Report (Secretariat for an Encyclopedia Africana), 3 (December, 1962), 1-3.
\textsuperscript{63} Broadcast by Nkrumah following the burial of Du Bois; copy of the speech was a special insert into Information Report (Secretariat for an Encyclopedia Africana), 6 (September, 1963).
\textsuperscript{65} Information Report (Secretariat for an Encyclopedia Africana), 10 (September, 1964), 3.
countries in September, 1964, President Nkrumah viewed the project as a Pan-African endeavor to erase forever notions of White superiority and Black inferiority.66

The new director spent from August, 1963, until August, 1966, assembling the plans of the contents and organizing a committee of specialists from various parts of Africa.67 In October, 1965, the Organization of African Unity during one of its heads of states summit meetings in Accra gave its blessing to the Encyclopedia Africana. By that time articles were being collected and edited for the projected three volumes due out in 1970. But the Ghana coup on February 24, 1966, impeded the proceedings and the editors feared that the new government would stop support of the project. In his account of the coup, Dark Days in Ghana, Nkrumah said that the project was being deliberately broken up because of the principles and the ideology which inspired it.68

The leadership of the project was taken from the hands of its last Afro-American editor in August, 1966, when Hunton was made secretary. A Ghanaian, L. H. Ofosu-Appiah of the Ghana Academy of Sciences, was made editor. According to Hunton, his removal was not personal, but it was upsetting and embarrassing.69 Ofosu-Appiah felt it necessary to assure the public that the new regime planned to continue the work; he also stated that he doubted there would be a Marxist slant in the ideology.70 But only one volume was scheduled to be published in 1970. A lack of funds and the failure of the various national cooperating committees to cooperate were held responsible.71 When the Pan-African Cultural Festival met in Algiers in July, 1969, a committee of the African cultural symposium called for the publication of an "African encyclopaedia."72 A volume of biographies is due out soon.73

Certain basic conclusions emerge from a study of Du Bois' efforts to publish a multivolume encyclopedia on the Negro. He obviously knew that the publication of such a work meant immortality for him as well as racial uplift for Africans and Afro-Americans. His efforts demonstrate decisively that in order to begin to understand the complex personality and the multitudinous works of Du Bois, one must trace some of the threads of his life that led him to devote so much of his thoughts to the project and to spend his last days as a Ghanaian citizen and a confessed Communist. He had his fingers and his mind on the pulse of the future directions of the intellectuality of the Black mind. His prophetic gifts remained with him to the last; he must be considered a romantic radical, who had his race at heart.

73. L. W. Hesse to the author, August 6, 1970.